



# **LINCOLN CHAFEE**

## **U.S. SENATOR**

### **RHODE ISLAND**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **CHAFEE ANNOUNCES GRANT TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF HIV VACCINE**

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee announced today that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has notified him that Brown University has been awarded \$40,320 for pre-clinical studies of the development of a vaccine to treat HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The program, Epitope Driven HIV Development, has been awarded this funding from the Fogarty International Center to further the research into the vaccine, in addition to supporting a collaboration between researchers in Bamako, Mali and those at Brown University.

“The research being conducted at Brown University to advance the treatment of HIV/AIDS is truly remarkable,” Senator Chafee said. “I am pleased that this money is being made available to allow Brown to work in conjunction with other researchers to begin clinical trials to ultimately develop a workable vaccine that can be used as a viable defense against the HIV virus.”

Developed by Brown University’s TB/HIV Research Lab, the vaccine, named the GAIA vaccine, has been developed from selected HIV T cell epitopes, which are believed to elicit T-cell immune responses. Pre-clinical studies of the GAIA vaccine epitopes using blood from HIV positive patients recruited in Providence will then be conducted, to confirm the immunogenicity of the epitopes by screening blood from HIV-positive patients with different strains of HIV. Subsequently, funding will support a collaborative effort between researchers at Bamako, Mali and the TB/HIV Research Laboratory at Brown, ultimately to screen the GAIA vaccine epitopes using blood from HIV-infected Malian patients. In the short term, this research would allow the research team to confirm candidate HIV vaccine epitopes in the context of HIV in Mali. In the long term, the goal of this collaboration is to develop a close working relationship between the TB/HIV Research Lab and Malian investigators, who might then host clinical trials of the GAIA vaccine when it's ready.

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